

population. The chief thing to be said for such a permanent census is that it would certainly afford a means of collecting much needed statistical data, on a scale which would enormously add to its value.

R. A. F.

**Kelynack, T. N., M.D.** *Defective Children*. London: Fisher Unwin; 1916; pp. 462; 7s. 6d. net.

THIS is another of the useful volumes—of which “Mental Derelicts,” “Medical Examination of Schools and Scholars,” and “Tuberculosis in Infancy and Childhood” are its precursors—that the industry and enterprise of Dr. Kelynack has presented to the cultured student of social, eugenic and medical problems. It is doubly useful as serving the needs of the hour, for it deals with the whole problem of child welfare, and it points out the physical and mental deficiencies of child life upon a most carefully thought out plan and scheme. It also includes their relief and treatment. The volume is dedicated to Sir George Newman as a tribute to his administrative skill in organising the successful service described as that of medical officers of schools; the outcome of that most valuable committee which several years ago enquired into the whole question of physical deterioration among the people, and which Sir George Newman has successfully tackled by commencing with the inspection and treatment (subsequently) of school children.

Dr. Hope, the well-known Medical Officer of Health for Liverpool, writes the first chapter, and has wisely directed attention to the need for a correlation of all endeavours—voluntary, rate and State-aided—which exist for the benefit of child welfare, in regard to which there is at present a not inconsiderable amount of overlapping. He foreshadows the treatment and preventive measures which should be adopted towards those children who are systematically underfed and who from various other causes are mentally maimed or physically crippled. The need for health visitors is urged upon all municipalities as a necessary corollary to the Notification of Births Act, which hitherto is only optional. Dr. Hamilton C. Marr writes with practical knowledge of the mentally defective; but there is no mention in his chapter of the Binet scheme as an aid to classification, and there is an obvious slip in his first essentials of treatment, which he suggests is to separate the feeble-minded from their fellows! He must mean from healthy children, for he proceeds to recommend the only and best method, which is to associate the feeble-minded and to classify them in suitable institutions. The same matter in greater detail is covered by Dr. Douglas W. Hunter, whose experience at the Royal Albert Institution entitles him to speak with authority. The epileptic child is ably dealt with by Dr. Andrew F. Hewart, who expresses the view that epilepsy results from a lack of co-ordinated control within the cerebral cortex, that it is consequent upon some failure in the balance of a specially fine adjustment. We consider that consciousness is the resultant or the expression of the total equilibrium of the whole conscious mechanism, and that intercurrent stimuli are continually shifting this equilibrium from one to another class of cerebral activities, in other words, that consciousness is a continuous dynamic process. Inborn or inherited vestigial variations occur in the epileptic which can and do disturb the co-ordinations of other cortical centres and producing a discharge, the most facile being that of movement through the lower motor neurons, which is the most elementary as well as the oldest and most accustomed form of discharge; but this discharge excites other areas in more distantly related centres of the brain, and this we consider to be the explanation of the composite disturbance that we call epilepsy. This dynamic view of consciousness was clearly adumbrated by Gowers, who described the cerebral cortex as normally in a state of constant tension and ready at any instant to respond to any stimulus. The treatment of the epileptic child is fully considered by Dr. Hewart, and will serve as a valuable

summary to any medical man having the care of such cases. Dr. William C. Sullivan contributes in his usually clear and succinct style an informing chapter upon the extremely difficult subject of moral responsibility or "Criminal Children," and he furnishes a bibliography for the use of readers which occupies almost one-half the length of his own paper. He suggests that the prevention of this condition of moral imbecility, statistically an infrequent one, to be mainly in the direction of controlling parental alcoholism, which to us is as yet *not proven*.

Able articles have been contributed by others who also speak with authority in their special departments; that by Mr. N. Bishop Harman upon the diagnosis and treatment of defects of vision is very complete, and will be found to be a veritable handbook in itself; that by Mr. Walter R. Jordan upon the different forms of infantile paralyses, by Mr. A. H. Tubby upon spinal defects, by Dr. Alexander S. M. MacGregor upon rickets, by Dr. Lewis H. F. Thatcher upon speech defects, by Dr. Theodore Fisher upon heart affections, by Dr. James Kerr Love upon deafness, and Mr. Hastings Gilford upon some of the rarer abnormalities of child life, are all excellent. Articles upon school clinics and dental clinics, as well as open-air schools and schools for crippled and tuberculous children are all written by those whose practical knowledge entitles them to speak at first hand. An extremely interesting article by Dr. Catherine Chisholm upon the subject of defective girls in secondary schools, and one upon defective boys by Dr. John Lambert are full of sound information, and cannot but be of great assistance to all school medical officers as well as to all interested in eugenics. There is an account of defective children in Scotland, Ireland, Canada, and the United States, as well as in France and other European countries. The whole volume is one that redounds to the editorial credit and to the persevering ability and foresight of Dr. Kely-nack, who has brought out a handbook that will serve as the best yet published upon the subject of defective children.

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